



EDITOR-PUBLISHER



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GEORGE CREEL SOUNDS CALL TO UNSELFISH NATIONAL SERVICE TO NEWSPAPER MEN

In Address to North Carolina Editors the Chairman of the Committee on Public Information Urges That Our Newspapers Emphasize Truth, Not Tattle, and Carry to Every Person in the Land a Clear Understanding of American Purposes and Ideals—Press the Supreme Power in Developing Morale

CHIEF among the speakers on the programme at the annual convention of the North Carolina Press Association was George Creel, chairman of the Committee on Public Information, who made a talk that will long be remembered by the editors.

Before launching into his set speech, Mr. Creel took occasion to pay a magnificent tribute to Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels, himself an editor of note, and a man whom Mr. Creel declared to be one of the "real pillars" of the American Government. The speaker declared that he had read slighting criticism of Mr. Daniels, and had seen him ridiculed in the press, but that a personal acquaintance with the Secretary had quickly disclosed his real worth.

To-day, Mr. Creel declared, America and the whole world know that Josephus Daniels was the right man for his present place, and to any who may have lingering doubts, the efficiency of the American navy is the best answer.

Mr. Creel's speech in part was as follows:

Is Not a Censor

"Let me say at the very outset that I am not the censor or even a censor.

"I took this position because I believed in the freedom of the press, and wanted to be in position where I could help to guard it. You know and I know that this freedom has been often abused, but it is stupid to try to cure an evil by cutting it out. A better way is to crowd it out. Suppression is not a wise remedy. Hope of betterment lies in the slow processes of education and in the development of a capacity for restraint and self-discipline.

"I was not in favor of a censorship law in the beginning, nor am I now in favor of the enactment of any legislation. Aside from the physical difficulties of enforcement, the enormous cost, the overwhelming irritation, and the inevitable tendency of such laws to operate solely against the weak and powerless, I have always had the conviction that our hope must lie in the aroused patriotism, the nobler consciences, of the men who make the papers of America.

"The great need is not that we should keep the press from doing hurtful things, but that we should get the press to do the helpful things. The compunctions we want can never be applied from without, but must proceed from within.



GEORGE CREEL,
Chairman of the Committee on Public Information.

"It was upon this theory, when the proposed law failed of passage, that I evolved the voluntary agreement under which the press is its own censor.

"The desires of Government with respect to the concealment from the enemy of military policies, plans, and movements, are set forth in certain spe-

cific requests. No law stands behind them. Their observance rests entirely upon honor and patriotism. There are violations, as a matter of course, and papers holding to the unwritten agreement have suffered injury from papers less careful and less honest, but, on the whole, the press has responded in the same spirit of unselfish service that animates the firing line.

"This is the only censorship exercised by the Committee on Public Information.

"In all else the work is positive, the emphasis on expression. The Committee, in plain, is the machinery created by the President of the United States to make the fight for public opinion both in this country and in other countries of the world.

"There is nothing academic in this proposition. Public opinion stands recognized as a vital part of national defense, a mighty force in national attack. The strength of the firing line is not in trench or barricade alone, but has its source in the morale of the civilian population from which the fighting force is drawn.

"As the nation is united, resolute, and convinced of the justice of its cause, so may heroic efforts be expected of its defenders. Disunity and disloyalty tear at the very heart of courage. The Committee fights ignorance, misunderstanding, and disaffection. It works for the maintenance of morale by every process of stimulation. We do not call it propaganda, for that word, in the German hands, has come to be associated with lies and corruptions. Our work is educational and informative, for we have such confidence in our cause that we feel that no more than a fair presentation of its facts is needed to win the verdict.

"Under the pressure of this necessity, the Committee has grown to be a world organization. Not only does it reach deep into every community in the United States, but it carries the aims and objects of America to every land.

Support Based on Understanding

"At every point our accent is on expression, not repression. From the Committee goes out the official war information; in each of the war-making branches we have sworn representatives whose duty it is to open up operations to the inspection of the people as far as military prudence will permit. We believe that public support is a

matter of public understanding, and it is our job to take dead wood out of the channels of information, permitting a freer, more continuous flow.

"The press, I feel, is commencing to realize our honesty of purpose, and the military experts are growing to have an increasing faith in the power of absolute frankness. The army and navy, through this Division of News, has pledged to the people instant and honest announcement of all casualties, all accidents, all disasters. Bear this in mind when the air fills with rumors about the sinking of a transport, the loss of thousands of soldiers in France, the destruction of the fleet. Brand them as lies, and publish the liar, for the Government does not suppress such news or seek to minimize it. We do not have to conceal reverses, because we do not have to fear for the courage of America.

Accuracy of Committee's Report

"It is for you to remember, and I make the statement with pride, that, while this Committee has issued thousands of releases during the year of its existence, only three of this vast number have ever been questioned as to absolute accuracy.

"The first of these, a direct charge that the Fourth of July statement was a 'fake,' and that our transports had not been attacked by submarines, was met fully by the report of Admiral Gleaves.

"The second complaint, concerned with certain captions for airplane photographs, was largely due to a confusion between training planes and battle planes. The captions referred to training-plane production and the pictures showed clearly that the machines were training planes.

"The third, a release bearing upon airplane production and shipment, came to us with explicit endorsements that we were without right to question.

"A system of checking and verification is now permitted that will hereafter guard effectively against error.

Foreign-Language Press

"The foreign-language press is dealt with by a distinct division that has enlisted the services of over two hundred volunteer translators. Reports are made on virtually every paper in the United States that is not printed in English, and we try to fight ignorance and untruth with a steady stream of articles selected with particular reference to the race or to the problem of bitterness.

"The Official Bulletin has a daily free circulation of 100,000, and, although a seemingly prohibition price was fixed, over \$35,000 has been received in subscriptions in its first year.

"A mobilization has taken place in the advertising forces of the nation, and from a central office in New York a great army of experts is directed with almost military precision. These men put the idea and needs of the Government into proper and attractive form, arrange for its presentation in the daily and periodical press, on the billboards of the country, and in the cars, and in the coming year alone will furnish millions of dollars' worth of space to the national service.

"The activities that I have mentioned concern themselves entirely with the domestic situation, but beyond the United States are countries that are just as much a part of my job as any commonwealth in the Union. It is our right and our necessity to fight for public opinion in every other country in the world, and we make this fight in print, in speech, and on the screen.

"We found that America was dependent upon foreign press agencies for our intercourse with other nations, that the volume of information was small, and what was worse, concerned only with the violent and unusual in our national life. To remedy this evil situation we devised cable and wireless services, and each day one thousand words go out to every foreign capital for distribution to the press of the particular country.

Carrying American Ideals to All Nations

"In Russia alone, as an illustration of activity, our organization stretches from Petrograd to Vladivostok, great printing plants are employed for our work alone, the principal theatres are hired for the exhibition of our pictures, and our speakers and printed appeals, in every one of the varied languages of Austro-Hungary, go into the enemy country wherever possible, along the firing line, into cities and villages, and particularly into the prison camps. The enemy countries themselves are invaded through the air. Bombardment planes and balloons, loaded with leaflets and pamphlets that tell the truth to a deluded people, go regularly over the firing lines and far into the land both on the eastern and western fronts.

"There is no activity of the Committee that we are ashamed to reveal, no dollar that is sent on a furtive errand, but peculiarly is this true of our work in other lands. No paper is subsidized, no official is bought, no corruption is employed.

"It is a tremendous fight that the Committee is waging, and to its banners it calls all that is fine and ardent in our civilian population. This fight for public opinion, both here and all over the world, will not be won until every man, woman, and child enlists as a soldier, standing squarely behind the war, believing passionately in its justice, and combatting lies, prejudices, and misrepresentations just as our men in France combat the Hun.

"It is up to the press to see to it that we do not have to wear gas masks here at home. The press sees, hears, and speaks for the nation. No other medium has such power to rally, to interpret and to enthuse, and as the printed word is conceived in truth, courage, and patriotism, so will a people grow in understanding, unity, and indomitable purpose.

"The tremendous necessities of the hour call every newspaperman to the colors no less than the soldier and the sailor. We, too, must search our hearts, gird our loins, and make vows of loyalty and sacrifice.

Power of Press for National Service

"I have a very real pride in our profession. We are the most powerful in the land to-day. Not even the President of the United States can be heard beyond the door of the White House if it were not for the writers that put his messages before the public and send them abroad throughout the world. What of Congress? Its voice would not carry beyond the Capitol if it were not for the printed word.

"Our duty is to be jealous of our power, and to give it purpose and direction. Make every word count. Cut out the non-essential. That is what we have got to do in manufacturing, what we have got to do in every line of business, and equally must the press prepare to give up the unimportant, and devote its space to the essential. When you know that what you write

is going to be read by millions, when you know it is going to have power to mould thought; when you know it is going to have power to bring order out of chaos and clarity out of confusion, I say every one of you should have a thrill of conscious power and great responsibility when you sit down and take your pen in hand.

A Heart for News

"What one of us but has heard that ancient phrase, 'a nose for news'? What we need to-day, when men are going forth to fight and die, is a heart for news, a soul for news. None of us but were reared in the faith that if a dog bit a man, that was *not* news, but if a man bit a dog that was news. How cheap, and how terrible in its cheapness, is this sort of thing to-day when the world, like some great shell of the sea echoes unceasingly the moan of mangled men, orphaned children and widowed women.

"The press will not be upon a war basis until it takes away its emphasis from tattle and puts it on truth. It is not enough to give columns to war work news. It is one's life that must be consecrated to the war itself.

"A campaign against the German whisper is peculiarly the duty of the press. It is also the case that the press can carry to all the great message of sacrifice and endeavor, making it reach every man, woman, and child, teaching them that there is more than one kind of service, that there is a service in the shop, a service in the store, a service in the factory, the field, and the home, a service in all the innumerable walks of life, both industrial and commercial, that will be accounted as noble and as heroic as service in the trench or on the great gray ships that guard our shores.

"Partisanship still persists, and while the nation fights for its life, columns are being printed that have no larger object than some mean political advantage.

"The great and overwhelming consciousness of duty is not going to be driven home until the press returns to its historic mission, and again takes its place as a great educational interpretative force in the national life.

"It is the hour of opportunity. It is up to the press to mould the public opinion of America into the iron shapes of an indomitable resolution and there can be no excuse for failure. For, my friends, it is easy to plead a just cause, and never in the history of the world did a people take arms in such purity of purpose, such nobility of resolve."

Halifax Herald Offers Reward

HALIFAX, N. S., August 14.—The Halifax Herald and the Evening Mail have offered a reward of \$5,000 "to any person who will supply information of the location of a base on the Nova Scotia coast or the seaboard of the Bay of Fundy used by the German submarines now operating in the North Atlantic waters and which information will lead to the seizure and destruction of said base of operations." The Herald also offers to pay \$500 to any one giving information that will lead to the first arrest and proper punishment of any of the enemy agents who, it is alleged by the Herald, infest Halifax.

McFaul Home from the East

ST. PAUL, Minn., August 14.—A. J. McFaul, director of advertising of the Dispatch-Pioneer Press, has returned from a vacation trip to eastern points.

MAJOR HENRY A. WISE GOING TO CAMP

Attorney for Paper Manufacturers in News Print Controversy Sought Service in France—Proud to Be in the Line

Henry A. Wise, who conducted the case for the paper manufacturers when they were indicted for alleged operation in restraint of trade, and also represented them in all the news print hearings before the Federal Trade Commission as well as in the appeal from the \$3.10 price before the Judges of the Second Circuit Court, is going to the war. He has been commissioned a major of infantry and ordered to report to Camp Lee, at Petersburg, Va.

"Don't forget to say that I am in the line," he adjured *THE EDITOR AND PUBLISHER*, when, at the close of the argument before the Circuit Court, he displayed his telegraphic summons. "I wouldn't be anywhere else. I want to fight. I'd hate to have my children say I was chairman of a draft board and didn't go to the front myself. I've sent a thousand men 'over there,' and I'm going to join them.

Major Wise is a graduate of the Virginia Military Institute. He was a captain at first in the Spanish-American War, and was made a major before he was mustered out in 1899.

Italian Editors Meet President Wilson

WASHINGTON, D. C., August 14.—President Wilson on Monday received the Italian editors who are visiting this country. They were accompanied to the White House by Count V. Macchi Di Cellers, Italian Ambassador, and by Chairman George Creel, of the Committee on Public Information, under whose auspices the editors are making their tour of this country. In his address to the editors, the President said:

"Gentlemen, we are not here in the service of Italy, we are not here in the service of America. We are here in the greatest of all services—the service which ennobles all who engage in it—the service of mankind. You are going to have a chance to see everything there is."

The editors were entertained at a luncheon, at which Secretaries Daniels, Lane, and Redfield and Henry P. Davison, of the American Red Cross, were speakers.

Get a Paper-Saving Poster

WASHINGTON, August 13.—The War Industries Board, through Dr. E. O. Merchant, a member of the Committee of the Paper and Pulp Section, who is also in charge of the paper investigation of the Federal Trade Commission, has authorized the issuance of an attractive poster, which will be sent broadcast, urging the saving of paper and giving seven very important reasons why it is very essential to save paper at this time.

No More Paper Export Restrictions

WASHINGTON, D. C., August 10.—Orders for paper for export, except for Canada, may be placed in such quantities, size, and weight as export requirements demand without regard to domestic regulations, the Pulp and Paper Section of the War Industries' Board announces. This ruling applies to orders now on the books and to future orders.